

by the National Association of Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors, and "Kentucky Contractor of the Year" by the Kentucky Association of Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors.

Tom began working in the industry after high school and, over the years, moved through the ranks from an entry-level position to eventually owning his own company. Today, Tom is one of the most well-known and well-respected businessmen in the state, with over 12,000 customers in Northern Kentucky, Eastern Indiana, and Southern Ohio.

Tom is a three-time appointee by the Governor to the Kentucky HVAC Licensing Board, which oversees the licensing and continuing education programs for the state's HVAC journeymen and Master License holders. He has been an example to board members and the entire industry by implementing his own rigorous employee training programs. His leadership and success in the field is one of the reasons Tom has been named Vice President of the Kentucky HVAC Licensing Board.

My colleagues and I congratulate you, Tom, on your recent accomplishments and commend your many years of service to Northern Kentucky's business community. Best wishes for many years of continued success.

Mr. President, I ask that the following Campbell County Recorder article from June 17, 1999, be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Campbell County Recorder, June 17, 1999]

CHAMBER ANNOUNCES ALBRIGHT WINNERS
TOM RECHTIN

This year's Outstanding Business Person recipient, Tom Rechtin, has been a community leader, role model and an advocate for education for more than 35 years. Rechtin has used his personal and professional experience, knowledge and ability to include others to advance the educational system and consequently the economy in Northern Kentucky.

This recipient of the Albright Award encourages employees to attend certification classes, participate in seminars and get involved in company educational programs. He provides tuition assistance for employees and currently employs four student interns who are seeking certification.

He supports education within his company and is an educational advocate in the community. Coupled with Cincinnati Public Schools, he helped found the first apprenticeship and continuing education program in the Tristate. Along with the Northern Kentucky Home Builders Association, he helped develop the first heating and cooling apprenticeship program in Northern Kentucky, and as chairman of the apprenticeship committee, he continues to develop new programs and lead efforts to fund the program.

Further, Rechtin is a member of the Kentucky State Licensing Board, serves on a Citizens Task Force aimed at evaluating and improving Bellevue Schools, and founded SMART TECH—a class that is offered at NKU annually to journeymen to meet state licensing requirements. Most recently, he sought to carry out a federal School-To-Work federal initiative promoting schools

and businesses to share knowledge and develop practical curriculums for students entering the workforce.

Outside of his work with education and his company, he is a member of the Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Readiness Council, a Master with the Boy Scouts of America, an athletic sponsor with the Bellevue Vets, a member of the Bellevue Renewal Committee and a council member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

The Chamber of Commerce is the largest volunteer business organization in Northern Kentucky. It works to encourage and promote economic well being, quality growth and community development for both Northern Kentucky and the region. •

TRI-CITIES, TN-VA: 1999 RECIPIENT
OF THE ALL-AMERICA CITY
AWARD

• Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, when our Founding Fathers began their fight for our Nation's independence, they had a vision of what America would be like. They saw a free and self-reliant people, ruled by State and local governments, who took responsibility for their own welfare and progress, and cared for themselves and for others in their own communities.

When Alexis de Tocqueville came to America almost a century later, that is what he saw. He later wrote that, in America, when a citizen saw a problem that needed solving, he would cross the street and discuss it with a neighbor, together the neighbors would form a committee, and before long the problem would be solved. "You may not believe this," he said, "but not a single bureaucrat would ever have been involved."

While today our citizens are increasingly ruled, not by local governments, but by Washington, the essence of what it means to be an American has not changed: We are a people willing to lend a hand, lift a spirit, and work together to make our land a better place.

For 50 years, the All-America City Awards have designated—from among all the cities in America—10 communities that have carried on this time-honored tradition and kept the spirit of America alive. And I'm proud to say that among this year's winners is Tri-Cities, TN-VA, a place our founding fathers would recognize as a fulfillment of their vision of what a free people, living and working together, can accomplish.

Among the criteria by which all participants were judged were citizen involvement, effective government performance, philanthropic and volunteer resources, a strong capacity for cooperation, and community vision and pride. And, Tri-Cities—the first-ever region to be so honored by this award—possesses those qualities in spades.

Included in the presentation which tipped the judges' decision in their favor were their efforts to involve youth in the decision-making process; improve health care in isolated communities and create an interest in rural medicine among future physicians; and celebrate and preserve the

Appalachian region's oral and musical traditions. And they did it all without government handouts or mandates from Washington. Their message, set to the sound of bluegrass music: we are willing to work; we are willing to lead.

I think the song, written by a local storyteller and sung by all the Tri-Cities delegates, says it all:

If you call, we will answer;

If you need us, we will come.

We'll lend a hand—there's strength in numbers;

If we work together, we can get it done.

Mr. President, on behalf of all the people of Tennessee, and all Americans everywhere, I congratulate the citizens of Tri-Cities, Tennessee-Virginia for their accomplishment. Not only they, but all of us, are winners because of their efforts. •

CLEVELAND SCHOLARSHIP AND
TUTORING PROGRAM

• Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the achievements of the Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program. Now in its third school year, this program, which is one of only two school choice experiments in the country, continues to offer hope and promise to nearly 3,700 inner city children and their parents by making private schools, including religious schools, affordable. I have been a long-time supporter of the Scholarship Program, as well as the school choice concept in general. Believing that competition fosters improvement, I made the implementation of this pilot school scholarship plan one of my education reform priorities by signing a 2-year budget package that included \$5 million for the introduction of the program in 1995.

The Cleveland Scholarship Program is the first of its kind in the country that offers state-funded scholarships for use at both secular and religious private schools, giving low-income students access to an otherwise unattainable private school education in Cleveland, where schools graduate a mere 36 percent of its high school seniors. In September of 1996, during its first school year, the program provided scholarships to approximately 1,855 students for the public, private, or religious school of their choice. Recent growth of the program's budget enabled the parents of nearly 3,700 students to use vouchers to enroll in 59 participating area schools during the 1998-1999 school year.

Two separate studies by Harvard University on the Cleveland Scholarship Program found parents of voucher recipients were more satisfied with many aspects of their school than were parents of students in Cleveland public schools. That satisfaction included the school's academic program, school safety, school discipline, teacher skills, the teaching of moral values, and class size. A separate study found that test